

(19)

A  
S E R M O N  
O F  
R E P E N T A N C E,

Preached before the Honourable House of Commons,  
Assembled in Parliament at  
*Westminster*, at their late solemn Fast for the settling  
of these Nations,  
*April 30. 1660.*

By *Richard Baxter.*

L O N D O N,

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TO THE  
HONOURABLE  
THE  
House of Commons  
ASSEMBLED IN  
PARLIAMENT.

**A**S your Order for my Preaching, perswaded me you meant attentively to hear; so your Order for my publishing this Sermon, perswaded me that you will vouchsafe

considerately to read it. (For you would not command me to publish only for others, that which was prepared for, and suited to your selves.) Which second favour if I may obtain, especially of those that need most to hear the doctrine of Repentance, I shall hope that the Authority of the heavenly Majesty, the great concernment of the subject, and the evidence of Reason, and piercing beams of sacred verity, may yet make a deeper impression on your souls, and promote that necessary work of Holiness, the fruits whereof would be effectual remedies to these diseased Nations, and would conduce to your own everlasting joy. Shall I think it were presumption for me to hope for so high a reward for so short a labour? Or  
shall



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shall I think it were uncharitableness not to hope for it? That here is nothing but plain English, without any of those Ornaments, that are by many thought necessary, to make such discourses grateful to ingenuous curious auditors, proceeded not only from my present want of advantages for study (having and using no book but a Bible and a Concordance,) but also from the humbling and serious nature of the work of the day: and from my own inclination, less affecting such ornaments in sacred discourses, then formerly I have done. It is a very great honour that God and you have put upon me, to conclude so solemn a day of prayer, which was answered the next morning, by your speedy, and cheerful, and unanimous acknowledgement of his Majesties authority.

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authority. *May I but have the second part, to promote your salvation, and the happiness of this Land, by your considering and obeying these necessary Truths, what greater honour could I expect on earth? Or how could you more oblige me to remain*

*A daily Petitioner to Heaven  
for these mercies, on your own  
and the Nations behalf,*

*Rich. Baxter.*



A  
S E R M O N  
O F  
R E P E N T A N C E.

E Z E K. 36. 31.

*Then shall ye remember your own evil wayes, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves in your own sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.*



THE words are a part of Gods Prognosticks of the Jews restoration, whose dejection he had before described. Their disease begun within, and there God promiseth to work the cure. Their captivity was but the fruit of their voluntary captivity to sin; and their grief of heart, was but the fruit of their hardness of heart;

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heart;

*heart*; and their sharpest *sufferings*, of their foul *pollutions*; and therefore God promiseth a methodical cure; even to *take away their old and stony heart*, and *cleanse them from their filthyness*, and so to *ease them* by the removing of the *cause*. How far, and when this promise was to be made good to the Jews, as Nationally considered, is a matter that requires a longer disquisition then my limited hour will allow: and the decision of that case is needless, as to my present end and work. That this is part of the Gospel-Covenant, and applicable to us Believers now, the Holy-Ghost in the Epistle to the *Hebrews* hath assured us.

The Text is the description of the *Repentance* of the people, in which the *beginning* of their *recovery* doth consist, and by which the *rest* must be attained. The *evil* which they *Repent* of is, in general, *all their iniquities*, but especially their *idolatry*, called their *abominations*. Their *Repentance* is fore-told, as it is in the *understanding* and *thoughts*, and as in the *will* and *affections*. In the former its called [*Remembering their own evil wayes*] In the latter its called [*Loathing themselves in their own sight, for their iniquities and abominations.*] *Montanus* translates it [*Reprobabitur in vos*] but in c. 20. v. 43. [*fastidietis vos*] The same sense is intended by the other versions: When the *Septuagint* translates it by [*displeasure*] and the *Chaldee* by [*groaning*] and the *Syriack* by [*the wrinkling of the face*] and the *Sept.* in c. 20. 43. by [*smiting on the face:*] the *Arabick* here perverts the sense, by turning all to *Negatives* [*ye shall not, &c.*] yet in c. 20. 43. he turns it by [*the tearing of the face.*]

face. ] I have purposely chosen a Text, that needs no long explication, that in obedience to the foreseen straits of time, I may be excused from that part, and be more on the more necessary. This Observation contains the meaning of the Text, which by Gods assistance, I shall now insist on : viz.

*The Remembring of their own iniquities, and loathing themselves for them, is the sign of a Repenting people, and the Prognostick of their Restoration.* ( So far as deliverance may be here expected. )

For the opening of which, observe these things following.

2. It is not all kind of [ *Remembring* ] that will prove you *penitent*. The impenitent Remember their sin that they may commit it : They remember it with love, desire and delight : The Heart of the worldling goeth after his aery or earthen idol : The heart of the Ambitious feedeth on his vain-glory, and the peoples breath : And the filthy Fornicator is delighted in the thoughts of the object and exercise of his lust. But it is a Remembring, 1<sup>o</sup> From a deep conviction of the evil and odiousness of sin ; 2<sup>o</sup> And with abhorrence and self-loathing ; 3<sup>o</sup> That leadeth to a resolved and vigilant *forsaking*, that is the proof of true Repentance, and the Prognostick of a peoples restoration.

2. And it is not all *self-loathing* that will signifie true Repentance. For there is a *self-loathing* of the Desperate and the damned soul, that abhorreth it self, and teareth and tormenteth it self, and cannot be restrained from *self-revenge*, when it finds that it hath wilfully, foolishly and obstinately been its own de-

stroyer : But the *self-loathing* of the truly penitent, hath these following properties.

1. It proceedeth from the predominant Love of God, whom we have abused and offended : The more we Love him, the more we *loath* what is contrary to him.

2. It is much excited by the observation and sense of his exceeding *mercies*, and is conjunct with Gratitude.

3. It continueth and encreaseth under the greatest assurance of forgiveness, and sense of love ; and dyeth not when we think we are out of danger.

4. It containeth a Loathing of sin as sin (and a Love of Holiness as such) and not only a love of ease and peace, and a loathing of sin as the cause of suffering.

5. It resolveth the soul against returning to its former course, and resolveth it for an entire devotedness to God for the time to come.

6. It deeply engageth the penitent in a *conflict* against the *flesh*, and maketh him victorious ; and setteth him to *work* in a life of holiness as his trade and principal business in the world.

7. It bringeth him to a *delight* in God and holiness ; and a delight in *himself*, so far as he findeth God, and Heaven, and Holiness within him : He can with some comfort and content own himself and his conversation, so far as God (victorious against his carnal self) appeareth in him. For as he loveth Christ in the *rest* of his members, so must he in *himself*. And *this* is it that *self-loathing* doth prepare for.

*This* must be the *self-loathing* that must afford you comfort,

comfort, as a penitent people in the way to restoration.

Where you see it is implied, that materially it containeth these common acts. 1. *Accusing* and *Condemning* thoughts against our selves. It is a judging of our selves, and makes us call our selves with *Paul*, *foolish, disobedient, deceived, yea mad* ( as *Acts* 26. 11. ) and with *David* to say, *I have done foolishly*, 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. 2. It containeth a deep distaste, and *displeasure* with our selves; and a *heart-rising* against our selves. 3. As also an holy *indignation* against our selves; as apprehending that we have playd the enemies to our selves and God. 4. And it possesseth us with *grief* and *trouble* at our miscarriages: So that a soul in this condition is sick of it self, and vexed with its self-procured woe.

2. Note also, that when *self-loathing* proceedeth from *meer conviction*, and is without the Love of God and holiness, it is but the *tormentor* of the soul, and runs it deeper into sin: provoking men here to destroy their lives; and in hell it is the never dying worm.

3. Note also, that it is [*themselves*] that they are said to *loath*: because it is *our selves* that conscience hath to do with, as *witness* and as *judge*: It is *our selves* that are *naturally* nearest to *our selves*; and our own affairs that we are most concerned in. It is *our selves* that must have the Joy or Torment: and therefore it is our *own actions* and estate that we have first to mind. Though yet as Magistrates, Ministers, and neighbours, we must *next* mind *others*, and must loath iniquity wherever we meet it; and a



*wile person must be condemned in our eyes, while we honour them that fear the Lord, Psal 15. 4.*

And as by *Nature*, so in the *Commandment*, God hath given to every man the first and principal care and charge of *himself*, and his *own* salvation, and consequently of his *own* wayes. So that we may with less suspicion *loath our selves*, then *others*; and are more obliged to do it.

4. Note also, that it is not for our troubles, or our disgrace, or our bodily deformities or infirmities, or for our poverty and want, that penitents are said to *loath themselves*: But for their *iniquities* and *abominations*. For 1<sup>o</sup> this *loathing* is a kind of *Justice* done upon our selves; and therefore is exercised not for meer *infelicities*, but for *crimes*. Conscience keepeth in its own Court, and medleth but with *moral evils*, which we are conscious of. 2<sup>o</sup> And also it is sin that is *loathed* by God, and makes the creature *loathsome* in his eyes: And *Repentance* conformeth the soul to God, and therefore causeth us to *loath* as he doth, and on his grounds. And 3<sup>o</sup> there is no *Evil* but *sin*, and that which sin procureth. And therefore it is *for sin* that the penitent *loaths* himself.

5. Note also, that it is here implied, that till *Repentance*, there was none of this *Remembring of sin*, and *Loathing of themselves*. They begin with our conversion, and (as fore-described) are proper to the truly penitent. For (to consider them distinctly) 1<sup>o</sup> The deluded soul that is bewitched by its own concupiscence, is so taken up with *Remembring* of his *fleshy pleasures*, and his *alluring objects*, and his *honours*, and his *earthly businesses* and *store*, that he hath



hath no mind or room for the *Remembring* of his foolish odious sin, and the wrong that he is doing to God and to himself. *Death* is oblivious : and *Sleep* hath but a distracted uneffectual memory, that stirreth not the busie dreamer from his pillow, nor dispatcheth any of the work he dreams of. And the unconverted are *asleep* and *dead* in sin. The crowd of cares and worldly busineses, and the tumultuous noise of foolish sports, and other sensual passions and delights, do take up the minds of the unconverted, and turn them from the observation of the things of greatest everlasting consequence. They have a memory for *sin* and the *flesh*, to which they are *alive* ; but not for things spiritual and eternal, to which they are *dead*. They Remember not God himself *as God*, with any effectual remembrance : *God is not in all their thoughts*, Psalm 10. 4. They live as *without him in the world*, Eph. 2. 12. And if they *remember not God*, they cannot *remember sin as sin*, whose malignity lyeth in its opposition to the *Will* and *Holiness* of God. They forget *themselves*, and therefore must needs forget their sinfulness : Alas, they remember not (effectually and savingly) *what they are*, and *why they were made*, and *what they are daily nourished and preserved for*, and what business they have to do here in the world. They forget that they have souls to save or lose ; that must live in endless joy or torment : you may see by their careless and ungodly lives, that they forget it. You may hear by their carnal frothy speech, that they forget it. And he that *remembereth not himself*, remembereth not his *own concerns*. They forget the *end* to which they tend : The *life* which they

they must live *for ever*. The matters everlasting (whose greatness and duration, one would think should so command the mind of man, and take up all his thoughts and cares, in despite of all the little trifling matters that would avert them, that we should think almost of nothing else; yet) *these*, even *these*, that nothing but *deadness* or *madness* should make a *reasonable* creature to forget, are *daily forgotten* by the unconverted soul, or *uneffectually* remembered. Many a time have I admired, that men of reason that are here to day, and in endless joy or misery to morrow, should be *able* to forget such unexpressible concerns! Me thinks they should easier forget to rise, or dress themselves, or to eat, or drink, or any thing, then to forget an endless life, which is so undoubtedly *certain*, and so *near*. A man that hath a *cause* to be heard to *morrow*, in which his *life* or *honour* is concerned, *cannot forget it*: A wretch that is condemned to die to morrow, cannot forget it. And yet poor sinners, that are continually uncertain to live an hour, and certain speedily to see the Majesty of the Lord, to their unconceivable joy or terrour, as sure as now they live on earth, can forget these things for which they have their memory; and which one would think should drown the matters of this world, as the report of a Canon doth a whisper, or as the Sun obscureth the poorest glow-worm. O wonderful stupidity of an unrenewed soul! O wonderful folly and distractedness of the ungodly! That ever men *can forget*, I say again, that they *can forget*, eternal joy, eternal woe, and the eternal God, and the place of their eternal unchangeable abode, when  
they

they stand even at the door, and are passing in, and there is but the thin vail of flesh between them and that amazing sight, that eternal gulf; and they are daily dying, and even stepping in. O could you keep your honours here for *ever*; could you *ever* wear that gay attire, and gratifie your flesh with meats, and drinks, and sports, and lusts; could you *ever* keep your rule and dignity, or your earthly life in any state, you had some little poor excuse for not remembering the eternal things, (as a man hath, that preferreth his candle before the Sun:) But when death is *near and inexorable*, and you are sure to die as you are sure you live; when every man of you that sitteth in these seats to day can say, [ *I must shortly be in another world, where all the pomp and pleasure of this world will be forgotten, or remembered but as my sin and folly* ] one would think it were impossible for any of you to be ungodly; and to Remember the trifles and nothings of the world, while you forget that everlasting *All*, whose reality, necessity, magnitude, excellency, concernment and duration, are such, as should take up all the powers of your souls, and continually command the service and attendance of your thoughts, against all Seekers, and contemptible competitors whatsoever. But, alas, though you have the *greatest helps* (in subserviency to these commanding objects) yet will you not Remember the matters which alone deserve Remembrance. Sometimes the Preachers of the Gospel do call on you to Remember; to Remember your God, your souls, your Saviour, your ends and everlasting state, and to remember your misdoings, that you may loath your selves,

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and in Returning may find life : But some either scorn them , or quarrel with them , or sleep under their most serious and importunate solicitations , or carelessly and stupidly give them the hearing , as if they spoke but words of course , or treated about uncertain things , and spoke not to them from the God of heaven , and about the things that every man of you shall very shortly see or feel. Sometime you are called on by the voice of *conscience* within , to *remember* the unreasonableness and evil of your wayes : But conscience is silenced , because it will not be conformable to your lusts. But little do you think what a part your too-late-awakened *conscience* hath yet to play , if you give it not a more sober hearing in time. Sometime the voice of *common calamities* , and National or local judgements do call on you to *Remember* the evil of your wayes : But that which is spoken to *all* , or *many* , doth seem to *most* of them as spoken unto *none*. Sometime the voice of *particular judgements* , seizing upon your families , persons or estates , doth call on you to *remember* the evil of your wayes : And one would think the rod should make you hear. And yet you most disregardfully go on , or are only frightened into a few good purposes and promises , that die when health and prosperity revive. Sometime God joyneth all these together , and pleadeth both by word and rod , and addeth also the inward pleadings of his Spirit : He sets your *sins in order before you* ; Psalm 50. 21. and expostulateth with you the cause of his abused love , despised Sovereignty and provoked Justice ; and asketh the poor sinner , *Hast thou done well* :

well to waste thy life in vanity ? to serve thy flesh ? to forget thy God, thy soul, thy happiness ? and to thrust his service into corners, and give him but the odious leavings of the flesh ? ] But these pleas of God cannot be heard. O horrible impiety ! by his *own creatures* ! by *reasonable* creatures (that would scorn to be called fools or mad men) the *God of heaven cannot be heard*. The brutish, passionate, furious sinners, *will not Remember*. They *will not Remember*, what they have done, and with *whom* it is that they have to do, and what God thinks and saith of men in their condition ; and *whither* it is that the flesh will lead them ? and *what* will be the *fruit* and *end* of all their lusts and vanities ? and *how* they will *look back* on all at *last* ? and whether an *holy* or a *sensual* life will be sweetest to a dying man ? and what judgement it is that they will all be of, in the controversie between the flesh and spirit, at the later end : Though they have life, and time, and reason for these uses, we cannot entreat them, to consider of these things in time. If our lives lay on it, as their salvation, which is more, lyeth on it, we cannot intreat them. If we should kneel to them, and with tears beseech them, but once a day, or once a week, to bestow one hour in serious consideration of their latter end, and the everlasting state of Saints and sinners, and of the *equity* of the holy wayes of God, and the *iniquity* of their *own*, we cannot prevail with them. Till the God of heaven doth overrule them, we *cannot prevail*. The witness that we are forc't to bear, is sad : It is sad to us : but it will be sadder to these rebels, that shall one day know,

• that God will not be out-faced ; and that they may sooner shake the stable earth, and darken the Sun by their reproaches, then out-brave the Judge of all the world, or by all their cavils, wranglings or scorns, escape the hands of his revenging Justice.

But if ever the Lord will save these souls, he will bring their misdoings to their remembrance. He will *make them think* of that, which they were so loth to think on. You cannot *now abide* these troubling, and severe meditations : The thoughts of God, and Heaven, and Hell, the thoughts of your sins, and of your duties, are melancholly unwelcome thoughts to you : But O that you could fore-know the thoughts that you *shall have* of all these things ! Even the proudest, scornful, hardened sinner that heareth me this day, shall shortly have such a *Remembrance*, as will make him wonder at his present blockishness. O when the irresistible power of heaven shall *open* all your sins before you, and *command* you to *remember* them, and to *remember* the *time*, and *place*, and *persons*, and all the circumstances of them, What a change will it make upon the most stout or stubborn of the sons of men ? What a difference will there then be between that trembling self-tormenting soul, and the same that now in his gallantry can make light of all these things, and call the messenger of Christ that warneth him, a Puritane or a doating fool ! Your *memories* now are *somewhat* subject to your *wills* ; and if you *will not think* of your *own*, your *chief*, your *everlasting* concerns, you may *choose*. If you *will choose* rather to employ

employ your noble souls on beastly lusts, and waste your *thoughts* on things of nought, you may take your course, and chase a feather with the childish world, till over-taking it, you see you have lost your labour. But when *Justice* takes the work in hand, your *Thoughts* shall be no more subject to your *Wills*: You shall then *Remember* that which you are full *loath* to remember; and would give a world that you *could forget*. O then one cup of the waters of oblivion, would be of unestimable value to the damned! O what would they not give that they *could but forget* the time they lost, the mercy they abused, the grace which they refused, the holy servants of Christ whom they despised, the wilful sins which they committed, and the many duties which they wilfully omitted! I have oft thought of their case, when I have dealt with melancholy or despairing persons. If I advise them to cast away such thoughts, and turn their minds to other things, they tell me they *cannot*; it is not in their *power*; and I have long found, that I may almost as well persuade a broken head to give over aking. But when the holy God shall *purposely* pour out the vials of his wrath on the consciences of the ungodly, and open the books, and shew them all that ever they have done, with all the aggravations, how then shall these worms be able to resist?

And now I beseech you all consider; is it not better to *Remember* your sins on *earth*, then in *hell*? before your *Physitian*, then before your



*Judge ? for your cure, then for your torment ?*  
Give me leave then, before I go any further, to address my self to you as the Messenger of the Lord, with this importunate request, both as you stand herein your *private*, and in your *publike* capacities. In the name of the God of Heaven I charge you [Remember the lives that you have led : Remember what you have been doing in the world ! Remember how you have spent your time : and whether indeed it is God that you have been serving, and Heaven that you have been seeking, and Holiness and Righteousness that you have been practising in the world till now ? Are your sins so small, so venial, so few, that you can find no employment on them for your memories ? Or is the offending of the Eternal God, so slight and safe a thing, as not to need your consideration ? God forbid you should have such atheistical conceits ! Surely God made not his Laws for nought ; nor doth he make such a stir by his Word, and Messengers, and Providences against an harmless thing ? Nor doth he threaten Hell to men for small indifferent matters : Nor did Christ need to have dyed, and done all that he hath done, to cure a small and safe disease. Surely that which the God of heaven is pleased to threaten with everlasting punishment, the greatest of you all should vouchsafe to *think* on, and with greatest fear and soberness to remember.

It is a pittiful thing, that with *men*, with *Gentlemen*, with *professed Christians*, Gods matters, and their



their *own* matters, their *greatest* matters, should seem unworthy to be *thought on*; when they have thoughts for their honours, and their lands, and friends; and thoughts for their children, their servants, and provision; and thoughts for their horses, and their dogs, and sports! Is God and Heaven less worth than these? Are death and Judgement matters of less moment? Gentlemen; you would take it ill to have your wisdom undervalued, and your reason questioned: For your Honour sake do not *make it* contemptible your selves, in the eyes of all that are truly wise. It is the nobleness of *objects* that must ennoble your *faculties*; and the *baseness* of objects doth *debase* them. If *brutish objects* be your employment and delight, do I need to tell you what you make your selves? If you would be *noble indeed*, let God and everlasting glory be the object of your faculties: If you would be *Great*, then dwell on *Greatest* things: If you would be *High*, then seek the things that are above, and not the sordid things of earth, *Col. 3. 1, 2, 3*. And if you would be *safe*, look after the enemies of your peace: and as you had *Thoughts of sin* that led you to *commit* it, entertain the Thoughts that would lead you to *abhor* it. O that I might have now but the grant of this reasonable request from you, that among all your Thoughts, you would bestow now and then an hour in the serious *Thoughts* of your misdoings, and soberly in your retirement between God and your souls, *Remember* the paths that you have trod; and whether  
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you have lived for the work for which you were created ? One sober hour of such employment might be the happyest hour that ever you spent, and give you more comfort at your final hour, then all the former hours of your life : and might lead you into that new and holy life, which you may review with everlasting comfort.

Truly, Gentlemen, I have long observed that *Satans* advantage lyeth so much on the *brutish* side, and that the work of mans Conversion, and holy Conversation, is so much carryed on by Gods exciting of our *Reason*, and that the misery of the ungodly is, that they have *Reason* in *faculty*, and not in *use*, in the greatest things, that I perswade you to this duty with the greater hopes : If the Lord will now perswade you but to retire from vanity, and soberly exercise your *Reason*, and *Consider your wayes*, and say, *What have we done ?* and *What is it that God would have us do ?* and *What shall we wish we had done at last ?* I say, could you now but be prevailed with, to bestow as many hours on this work, as you have cast away in idleness, or worse, I should not doubt, but I should shortly see the faces of many of you in Heaven, that have been recovered by the use of this advice. It is a thousand pitties, that men that are thought wise enough to be entrusted with the publick safety, and to be the Physicians of a broken State, should have any among them that are untrusty to their God, and have not the *Reason* to Remember their misdoings, and prevent the danger of their immortal souls. Will you sit all day

day here, to find out the remedy of a diseased Land; and will you not be intreated by God or man, to sit down one hour, and find out the disease of, and remedy for your own souls? Are those men likely to take care of the happiness of so many thousands, that will still be so careless of themselves? Once more therefore I entreat you, *Remember your misdoings*, lest God remember them: And bless the Lord that called you this day, by the voice of Mercy, to *Remember* them upon terms of Faith and Hope. *Remembered* they *must* be first or last: And believe it, this is far unlike the sad remembrance at Judgement, and in the place of woe and desperation.

And I beseech you observe here, that it is your *own* misdoings that you must *Remember*. Had it been only the sins of *other men*, especially those that *differ* from you, or have *wronged* you, or stand against your *interest*, how easily would the duty have been performed? How little need should I have had to press it with all this importunity? How confident should I be, that I could convert the *most*, if *this* were the Conversion? It grieves my soul to hear how quick and constant high and low, learned and unlearned are at this uncharitable contumelious *remembering* of the faults of others: how cunningly they can bring in their insinuated accusations: how odiously they can aggravate the smallest faults, where difference causeth them to distaste the person: how

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ordinarily they judge of actions by the persons, as if *any thing* were a crime that is done by such as they dislike, and *all* were *virtue* that is done by those that fit their humours : How commonly Brethren have made it a part of their *service of God*, to speak or write uncharitably of his *servants*; labouring to *destroy* the *bearers charity*, which had more need in this unhappy time, of the *bellows* then the *water* ! How usual it is with the ignorant that cannot reach the truth, and the impious that cannot bear it, to call such *Hereticks* that know more then themselves ! and to call such *Precisians*, *Puritans*, ( or some such name which Hell invents, as there is occasion ) who dare not be so *bad* as they ! How odious, men pretending to much gravity, learning and moderation, do labour to make those that are dear to God ; and what an art they have to widen differences, and make a sea of every lake ; and that perhaps under pretence of blaming the uncharitableness of others ! How far the very Sermons and discourses of some learned men are from the common rule of *doing as we would be done by* : and how loudly they proclaim that such men *love not their neighbours as themselves* ; the most uncharitable words seeming moderate which *they give* ; and all called intemperate that savoureth not of flattery, which *they receive* ! Were I calling the several exasperated factions now in *England*, to remember the misdoings of their supposed *adversaries*, What full-mouth'd and debasing Confessions

essions would they make ? What monsters of Heresie, and Schism, of impiety, treason and rebellion, of perjury and perfidiousness, would too many make of the faults of others, while they extenuate their *Own* to almost nothing ! It is a wonder to observe, how the *case* doth *alter* with the most, when that which was their *adversaries* case, becomes their *own*. The very prayers of the godly, and their care of their salvation, and their fear of sinning, doth seem their crime in the eyes of some that easily bear the guilt of swearing, drunkenness, sensuality, filchiness, and neglect of duty, in *themselves*, as a tolerable burden.

But if ever God indeed convert you, (though you will pity others, yet) he will teach you to begin at home, and take the beam out of your own eyes, and to cry out, [ *I am the miserable sinner.* ]

And lest these *generals* seem insufficient for us to confess on such a day as this, and lest yet your memories should need more help, is it not my duty to mind you of some particulars ? which yet I shall not do by way of *accusation*, but of *enquiry* : Far be it from me to judge so hardly of you, that when you come hither to *lament* your sins, you cannot with patience endure to be told of them.

1. Enquire then, whether there be none among you that live a sensual careless life, *cloathed* with the best, and *faring deliciously every day* ? in

*gluttony or drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, strife or envying, not putting on Christ, nor walking in the Spirit, but making provision for the flesh, to satisfy the lusts thereof, Rom. 13. 13, 14.* Is there none among you that spend your precious time in vanities, that is allowed you to prepare for life eternal? that have time to waste in complements, and fruitless talk, and visits, in gaming and unnecessary recreations, in excessive feasting and entertainments, while God is neglected, and your souls forgotten, and you can never find an hour in a day, to make ready for the life which you must live for ever. Is there none among you that would take that man for a Puritan or Phanatick, that should employ but half so much time for his soul, and in the service of the Lord, as you do in unnecessary sports and pleasures, and pampering your flesh? Gentlemen, if there be any such among you, as you love your souls, *Remember your misdoings, and bewail these abominations*, before the Lord, in this day of your professed humiliation.

2. Enquire whether there be none among you, that being strangers to the New birth, and to the inward workings of the Spirit of Christ upon the soul, do also *distaste an holy Life*, and make it the matter of your reproach, and pacify your accusing consciences with a Religion made up of meer words, and heartless out-side, and so much obedience as your fleshly pleasures will admit;

admit ; accounting those that go beyond you , especially if they differ from you in your modes and circumstances, to be but a company of proud, Pharisaical, self-conceited hypocrites, and those whom you desire to suppress. If there should be one such person here , I would entreat him to remember, that it is the solemn asseveration of our Judge, that *Except a man be converted, and be born again, of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of heaven.* Joh. 3. 3, 5. Mat. 18. 3. That if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his , Rom. 8. 9. That if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ; old things are past away , and all things are become new ; 2 Cor. 5. 17. That without holiness none shall see God, Heb. 12. 14. That the wisdom that is from above, is first Pure and then Peaceable, Jam. 3. 17. That God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth , John 4. 23, 24. That they worship in vain , that teach for Doctrines the commandments of men , Matth. 15. 8, 9. And that *Except your righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of heaven* , Matth. 5. 20. And I desire you to remember that its hard to kick against the pricks ; and to prosper in rage against the Lord : and that its better for that man that offendeth one of his little ones, to have had a mill-stone fastened to his neck , and to have been cast into the bottom of the Sea ; Matth. 18. 6. It is a sure and grievous condemnation, that waiteth for all that are themselves



*unholy* : but to the *haters* or *despisers* of the holy Laws and Servants of the Lord, how *much more grievous* a punishment is reserved ?

3. Enquire also, Whether there be none among you, that let loose your passions on your inferiours, and oppress your poor Tenants, and make them groan under the task, or at least do little to relieve the needy, nor study not to serve the Lord with your estates, but sacrifice all to the pleasing of your flesh, unless it be some inconsiderable pittance, or fruitless drops, that are unproportionable to your receivings. If there be any such, let them *Remember* their *iniquities*, and cry for mercy, before the cry of the poor to heaven, do bring down vengeance from him that hath promised to hear their cry, and speedily to avenge them, *Luke* 18. 7, 8.

7. Enquire, Whether there be none that live the life of *Sodom*, in *Pride*, *fulness of bread* and *idleness*, *Ezek.* 16. 49. and that are not puffed up with their estates and dignities, and are strangers to the humility, meekness, patience, and self-denial of the Saints : That ruffle in bravery, and contend more zealously for their honour and preheminance, then for the honour and interest of the Lord. For pride of apparel, it was wont to be taken for a childish or a womanish kind of vice, below a man ; but its now observed among the gallants, that (except in spots) the notes of vanity are more legibly written on the hair and dress of a multitude of  
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effeminate males, then on the females; proclaiming to the world *that pride*, which one would think even *pride it self* should have concealed; and calling by these signs to the beholders to observe the emptyness of their minds, and how void they are of that inward worth, which is the honour of a Christian, and of a man: It being a marvel to see a man of Learning, gravity, wisdom, and the fear of God, appear in such an antick dress.

I have done with the first part [*the Remembrance of your own evil wayes and doings.*] I beseech you practically go along with me to the next, [*The loathing of your selves in your own eyes, for all your iniquities and abominations.*]

*Every true Convert doth thus loath himself for his iniquities; and When God will restore a punished people upon their Repentance, he bringeth them to this loathing of themselves.*

1. A converted soul hath a new and heavenly *Light* to help him, to see those matters of humbling use, which others see nor.

2. More particularly, he hath the knowledge of sin, and of *himself*. He seeth the odious face of sin, and seeth how much his heart and life, in his sinful dayes abounded with it, and how great a measure yet remains.

3. He

3. He hath seen by Faith the Lord himself : The Majesty, the holiness, the jealousy, the goodness of the eternal God whom he hath offended ; and therefore must needs *abhor himself*, Job 42. 6.

4. He hath tasted of Gods *displeasure* against him for his sin already. God himself hath set it home, and awakened his conscience, and held it on, till he hath made him understand that the consuming fire is not to be jested with.

5. He hath seen *Christ Crucified*, and mourned over him. This is the glass that doth most clearly shew the ugliness of sin : And here he hath learned to abhor himself.

6. He hath fore-seen by Faith the *End of sin*, and the doleful recompence of the ungodly : His faith beholdeth the misery of damned souls, and the Glory which sinners cast away. He heareth them before-hand repenting and lamenting, and crying out of their former folly, and wishing in vain that all this were to do again, and that they might once more be tryed with another life, and resolving then how holily, how self-denyingly they would live ! He knows if sin had had its way, he had been plunged into this hellish misery himself, and therefore he must needs *loath himself for his iniquities*.

7. More

7. Moreover the true Convert hath had the liveliest taste of *mercy*; of the blood of Christ; of the offers and Covenant of grace; of *reprieving* mercy; of *pardon*ing mercy; of *healing* and *preserving* mercy; and of the unspeakable mercy contained in the *promise* of *everlasting life*: And to find that he hath sinned against *all this mercy*, doth constrain him to abhor himself.

8. And it is only the true Convert that hath a *new and holy nature*, contrary to sin; and therefore as a man that hath the *Leprosie* doth *loath himself* because his *nature* is contrary to his *disease*, so is it (though operating in a freer way) with a converted soul as to the Leprosie of sin. Oh how he *loaths* the remnants of his pride and passion; his excessive cares, desires, and fears; the backwardness of his soul to God and Heaven! Sin is to the new nature of every true Believer, as the food of a Swine to the stomach of a man; if he have eaten it, he hath no rest till he hath vomited it up: and then when he looketh on his vomit, he loatheth himself to think how long he kept such filth within him: and that yet in the bottom there is some remains.

9. The true Convert is one that is *much at home*; his heart is the Vineyard which he is daily dressing; his work is ordinarily about it; and therefore he is acquainted with those secret sins, and daily failings, which ungodly men that are strangers to themselves, do not observe, though they have them in dominion.

10. Lastly, A serious Christian is a *workman of the Lords*, and daily busie at the exercise of his gra-

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ces;

ces; and therefore hath occasion to observe his weaknesses, and failings, and from sad experience is forced to abhor himself.

But with careless unrenewed souls it is not so; some of them may have a mild ingenuous disposition, and the knowledge of their unworthiness; and customarily they will confess such sins as are small disgrace to them, or cannot be hid; or under the terrible gripes of conscience, in the hour of distress, and at the approach of death, they will do more; and abhor themselves perhaps as *Judas* did; or make a constrained confession through the power of fear. But so far are they from this *loathing of themselves for all their iniquities*, that sin is to them as their element, their food, their nature, and their friend.

And now, Honourable, Worthy and beloved auditors, it is my duty to enquire, and to provoke you to enquire, Whether the Representative body of the Commons of *England*, and each man of *you* in particular, be thus affected to your selves or not. It concerns *you* to enquire of it, as you love your souls, and love not to see the death-marks of impenitencie on them. It concerneth *us* to enquire of it, as we love you and the Nation, and would fain see the marks of Gods return in mercy to us, in your *self-loathing* and return to God. Let conscience speak as before the Lord that sees your hearts, and will shortly judge you: Have you had such a sight of your naturall and actuall sin and misery, of your neglect of God, your contempt of Heaven, your loss of precious hasty time, your worldly, fleshly, sensuall lives, and your omission of the great & holy works which you were made

made for? have you had such a sight and sense of these, as hath filled your souls with shame and sorrow? and caused you in tears or hearty grief to lament your sinful careless lives, before the Lord. Do you loath your selves for all this, as being vile in your own eyes, and each man say, *What a wretch was I? what an unreasonable self-hating wretch, to do all this against my self? what an unnaturall wretch! what a monster of rebellion and ingratitude, to do all this against the Lord of love and mercy? what a deceived foolish wretch! to prefer the pleasing of my lusts and senses, a pleasure that perisheth in the fruition, and is past as soon as its received, before the manly pleasures of the Saints, and before the souls delight in God, and before the unspeakable everlasting pleasures? was there any comparison between the brutish pleasures of the flesh, and the spiritual delights of a believing soul, in looking to the endless pleasure which we shall have with all the Saints and Angels in the glorious presence of the Lord. Was God and glory worth no more, then to be cast aside for satiating of an unsatisfiable flesh and fancy! and to be sold for a harlot, for a forbidden cup, for a little aire of popular applause, or for a burdensom load of wealth and power, for so short a time? where is now the gain and pleasure of all my former sins! what have they left but a sting behind them? How near is the time when my departing soul must look back on all the pleasures and profits that ever I enjoyed, as a dream when one awaketh; as delusory vanities, that have done all for me that ever they will do, and all is but to bring my flesh unto corruption (Gal. 6. 8.) and my soul to this distressing grief and fear! And then I must sing and*

laugh no more! I must brave it out in pride no more! I must know the pleasures of the flesh no more! but be levelled with the poorest, and my body laid in loathsome darkness, and my soul appear before that God whom I so wilfully refused to obey and honour. O wretch that I am! where was my understanding, when I plaid so boldly with the flames of hell, the wrath of God, the poison of sin! when God stood by and yet I sinned! when conscience did rebuke me, and yet I sinned! when Heaven or hell were hard at hand, and yet I sinned! when to please my God and save my soul I would not forbear a filthy lust, or a forbidden vanity of no worth! when I would not be perswaded to a holy, heavenly, watchful life, though all my hopes of Heaven lay on it. I am ashamed of my self: I am confounded in the remembrance of my wilfull self-destroying folly! I loath my self for all these abominations: O that I had lived in beggary and rags, when I lived in sin: and O that I had lived with God in a prison, or in a wilderness, when I refused a holy heavenly life, for the love of a deceitfull world! Will the Lord but pardon what is past, I am resolved through his grace to do so no more, but to loath that filth that I took for pleasure, and to abhor that sin that I made my sport; and to die to the glory and riches of the world, which I made my idol; and to live entirely to that God that I did so long ago and so unworthily neglect; and to seek that treasure, that Kingdom, that delight, that will fully satisfy my expectation, and answer all my care and labour, with such infinite advantage. Holiness or nothing shall be my work and life; and Heaven or nothing shall be my portion and felicity.

These.

These are the thoughts, the affections, the breathing of every regenerate gracious soul. For your souls sake enquire now, Is it thus with you? or have you thus returned with *self-loathing* to the Lord, and firmly engaged your souls to him at your entrance into a holy life? I must be plain with you Gentlemen, or I shall be unfaithfull: and I must deal closely with you, or I cannot deal honestly and truly with you. As sure as you live, yea as sure as the Word of God is true, you must all be such *converted men, and loath your selves for your iniquities*, or be condemned as impenitent to everlasting fire. To hide this from you, is but to deceive you, and that in a matter of a thousand times greater moment then your lives. Perhaps I could have made shift, instead of such serious admonitions, to have wasted this hour in flashy oratory, and neat expressions, and ornaments of reading, and other things that are the too common matters of ostentation, with men that preach Gods word in jeast, and believe not what they are perswading others to believe. Or if you think *I could not*, I am indifferent, as not much affecting the honour of *being able*, to offend the Lord, and wrong your souls, by dallying with holy things. Flattery in these things of soul concernment, is a selfish vilany, that hath but a very short reward; and those that are pleased with it to day, may curse the flatterer for ever. Again therefore let me tell you, (that which I think you will confess,) that it is not your greatness, nor your high looks, nor the gallantry of your spirits that scorns to be thus humbled, that will serve your turn when God shall deal with you, or save your carcasses from rottenness and dust, or



your guilty souls from the wrath of the Almighty. Nor is it your contempt of the threatnings of the Lord, and your stupid neglect, or scorning at the message, that will endure, when the sudden irresistible light shall come in upon you and convince you, or you shall see and feel what now you refused to believe ! Nor is it your outside hypocritical Religion, made up of meer words or ceremonies, and giving your souls but the leavings of the flesh, and making God an underling to the world, that will do any more to save your souls, then the picture of a feast to feed your bodies. Nor is it the *stiffest conceits* that you shall be *saved in an unconverted state*, or that you are *sanctified, when you are not*, that will do any more to keep you from damnation, then a conceit that you shall never die, will do to keep you here for ever. Gentlemen, though you are all here in health, and dignity, and honour to day, how little a while is it, alas how little, till you shall be every man in Heaven or Hell ! ( unless you are Infidels you dare not deny it. ) And it is only *Christ and a holy life* that is your *way to Heaven*; and only *sin, and the neglect of Christ and holiness* that can undo you. Look therefore upon sin as you should look on that which would cast you into Hell, and is daily undermining all your hopes. O that this Honourable Assembly *could know it* in some measure, as it *shall be shortly known* ? and judge of it as men do, when time is past, and delusions vanished, and all men are awakened from their fleshly dreams, and their naked souls have *seen the Lord* ? O then what *Laws* would you make against sin ? How speedily would you joyn your strength  
against



against it, as against the only enemy of your peace, and as against a fire in your houses, or a plague that were broken out upon the City, where you are? O then how zealously would you all concur to promote the interest of Holiness in the Land, and studiously encourage the servants of the Lord! How severely would you deal with those, that by making a mock of Godliness, do hinder the salvation of the peoples souls? How carefully would you help the Labourers that are sent to guide men in the holy path? and your selves would go before the Nation, as an example of penitent *self-washing* for your sins, and hearty conversion to the Lord. Is this your duty now, or is it not? If you cannot deny it, I warn you from the Lord, do not neglect it; and do not by your disobedience to a *convinced* conscience, prepare for a *tormented* conscience. If you know your Masters will and do it not, you shall be beaten with many stripes.

And your *publike capacity and work*, doth make *your Repentance* and *holiness* needfull to others as well as to *your selves*. Had we none to govern us, but such as entirely subject themselves to the Government of Christ; and none to make us Laws, but such as have his Law transcribed upon their hearts, O what a happy people should we be! Men are *unlikely* to make *strict Laws*, against the vices which they *love* and *live* in: or if they *make* them, they are more unlikely to *excuse* them. We can expect no great help against drunkenness, swearing, gaming, filthyness, and prophaneness, from men that love these abominations so well, as that they will rather part with God and their salvation, then they will let them go. All  
men

men are born with a Serpentine malice and enmity against the seed of Christ, which is rooted in their very natures. Custom in sin encreaseth this to more malignity; and it is only renewing grace that doth overcome it. If therefore there should be any among our Rulers, that are not cured of this mortal malady, what friendship can be expected from them to the cause and servants of the Lord? If you are all the children of God your selves, and Heaven be your end, and holiness your delight and business, it will then be your principal care to encourage it, and help the people to the happiness that you have found your selves. But if in any the original ( increased ) enmity to God and godliness prevail, we can expect no better ( ordinarily ) from such, then that they oppose the holiness which they hate, and do their worst to make us miserable. But woe to him that striveth against his Maker. Shall the thorns and bryers be set in battail against the consuming fire and prevail? *Isa* 27. 4, 5. Oh therefore for the Nations sake, begin at home, and cast away the sins which you wou'd have the Nation cast away! All men can say, that *Ministers* must teach by their *lives*, as well as by their *doctrines*; (and woe to them that do not.) And must not *Magistrates* as well govern by their *lives*, as by their *Laws*? Will you make Laws which you would not have men obey? Or would you have the people to be better then *your selves*? Or can you expect to be obeyed by others, when you will not obey the God of Heaven and Earth your selves? We beseech you therefore for the sake of a poor distressed Land, *let our recovery begin with you.* God looks so

so much at the *Rulers* of a Nation in his dealings with them, that ordinarily it goes with the people as their Rulers are. Till *David* had numbred the people, God would not let out his wrath upon them, though it was they that were the great offenders. If we see our Representative body begin in *loathing themselves for all their iniquities*, and turning to the Lord with all their hearts, we should yet believe that he is returning to us, and will do us good after all our provocations. Truly Gentlemen, it is much from you that we must fetch our comfortable or sad prognosticks, of the life or death of this diseased land. Whatever you do, *I know that it shall go well with the righteous*; but for the happiness or misery of the Nation in general, it is you that are our best prognostication. If you repent your selves, and become a holy people to the Lord, it promiseth us deliverance: But if you harden your hearts, and prove despisers of God and holiness, it is like to be our temporal, and sure to be your eternal undoing, if saving grace do not prevent it.

And I must needs tell you, that if you be not brought to loath your selves, it is not because there is no loathsome matter in you. Did you see your inside, you could not forbear it. As I think it would somewhat abate the pride of the most curious Gallants, if they did but see what a heap of flegme, and filth, and dung, (and perhaps crawling worms) there is within them: Much more should it make you loath your selves, if you saw those sins that are a thousand times more odious. And to instigate you hereunto, let me further reason with you.

1. You can easily loath an enemy ; and who hath been a greater enemy to any of you, then *your selves* ? *Another* may *injure* you ; but no man can everlastingly *undo* you, but *your selves*.

2. You abhor him that kills your dearest friends : and it is you by your sins that have put to death the Lord of life.

3. Who is it but your selves that hath robbed you of so much precious time , and so much precious fruit of Ordinances, and of all the mercies of the Lord ?

4. Who is it but your selves that hath brought you under Gods displeasure ? Poverty could not have made him loath you , nor any thing besides your sins.

5. Who wounded Conscience, and hath raised all your doubts and fears ? was it not your sinfull selves ?

6. Who is it but your selves that hath brought you so near the gulf of misery ? and endangered your eternall peace ?

7. Consider the *loathsome* nature of your sins, and how then can you choose but *loath* your selves ?

1. It is the creatures rebellion or disobedience against the absolute universal Sovereign.

2. It is the deformity of Gods noblest creature here on earth ; and the abusing of the most noble faculties.

3. It is a stain so deep that nothing can wash out but the blood of Christ. The flood that drowned a world of sinners, did not wash away their sins. The fire that consumed the Sodomites , did not consume their

their sins. Hell it self can never end it, and therefore shall have no end it self. It dieth not with you when you die : Though Churchyards are the guiltiest spots of ground, they do not bury and hide our sin.

4. The Church must *loath* it, and must cast out the sinner as loathsom if he remain impenitent : and none of the servants of the Lord must have any friendship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

5. God himself doth loath the creature for sin, and for nothing else but sin, *Zech. 11. 8. My soul loathed them. Deut. 32. 19. When the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons and daughters. ] Lev. 26. 30. My soul shall abhor you. ] Psalm 78 59. When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel. Lam. 2. 7. He abhorred his very Sanctuary. ] For he is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity, Hab. 1. 13. In a word, it is the sentence of God himself, that a wicked man is loathsom and cometh to shame, Prov. 13. 5. ] so that you see what abundant cause of self-*abhorrence* is among us.*

But we are much afraid of Gods departure, when we see how common *self-love* is in the world, and how rare this *penitent self loathing* is.

1. Do they *loath themselves* that on every occasion are contending for their honour, and exalting themselves, and venturing their very souls, to be highest in the world for a little while ?

2. Do they *loath themselves* that are readier to *justify* all their sins, or at least *extenuate* them, then *humbly confess* them ?

3. Do they *loath themselves* for all their sins, that cannot *endure to be reprov'd*, but *loath* their friends,

and the Ministers of Christ that tell them of their *leathfornisse*?

4. Do they *loath themselves* that take their pride it self for *manhood*, and Christian *humility* for *baseness*, and *brokenness of heart* for *whining hypocrisie* or *folly*, and call them a company of *Priest-ridden fools*, that lament their sin, and ease their souls by free confession? Is the ruffling bravery of this City, and the strange attire, the haughty carriage, the feasting, idleness and pomp, the marks of such as *loath themselves* for all their abominations? why then was *fasting*, and *sackcloth*, and *ashes*, the badg of such in ancient times?

5. Do they *loath themselves* for all their sins, who *loath those* that will not do as they? & speak reproachfully of such as run not with them to the same excess of riot, 1 Pet. 4. 4. and count them *Precisians* that dare not spit in the face of Christ, by wilful sinning as venturously and madly as themselves?

6. Or do they *loath themselves* for all their sins, that *love* their sins, even better then their God, and will not by all the obtestations, and commands, and intreaties of the Lord, be perswaded to forsake them? How far all these are from this *self-loathing*, and how far that *Nation* is from happiness where the *Rulers* or *inhabitants* are such, is easie to conjecture.

I should have minded you what *sins of the Land* must be *remembered*, and *loathed*, if we would have peace and healing. But as the glass forbids me, so, alas, as the sins of *Sodom*, they declare themselves. Though through the great mercy of the Lord, the  
body

*body of this Nation*, and the *sober part*, have not been guilty of that Covenant-breaking, perfidiousness, treason, sedition, disobedience, self-exalting, and turbulence as some have been, and as ignorant foreigners through the calumnies of malicious adversaries may possibly believe; yet must it be for a lamentation through all generations, that *any* of those that *went out from us*, have contracted the guilt of such abominations, and occasioned the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme; and that any in the *pride* or *simplicity* of their hearts, have followed the conduct of Jesuitical seducers, they knew not whither, nor to what.

That Profaneness boundeth on the other side, and drunkenness, swearing, fornication, lasciviousness, idleness, pride and covetousness, do still survive the Ministers that have wasted themselves against them, and the labours of faithful Magistrates to this day! And that the two extreames of *Herésie* and *Profaneness*, do increase each other; and while they talk against each other, they harden one another, and both afflict the Church of Christ. But especially woe to *England* for that crying sin, *the scorning of a holy life*, if a wonder of mercy do not save us. That people *professing the Christian Religion*, should scorn the diligent practice of that Religion which *themselves profess*! That obedience to the God of Heaven, that imitation of the example of our Saviour who came from Heaven to teach us Holiness, should not only be neglected, unreasonably and impiously neglected, but also by a transcendent impious madness, should be made a matter of reproach! That the holy Ghost



into whose name as the sanctifier these men were themselves baptized, should not only be resisted, but his sanctifying work be made a scorn ! That it should be made a matter of derision, for a man to prefer his soul before his body, and Heaven before earth, and God before a transitory world, and to use his reason in that for which it was principally given him, and not to be wilfully mad in a case where madness will undo him unto all eternity ! Judge as you are men, whether hell itself is like much to exceed such horrid wickedness ! and whether it be not an astonishing wonder, that ever a reasonable soul should be brought to such a height of abomination ! That they that profess to *believe the holy Catholic Church, and the Communion of Saints*, should deride the *holiness* of the Church, and the *Saints* and their *communion* ! that they that pray for the *hallowing of Gods name, the coming of his Kingdom, and the doing of his will, even as it is done in heaven*, should make a mock at all this that they pray for ! How much further think you is it possible for wicked souls to go in sinning ? Is it not the *God of heaven himself* that they make a scorn of ? Is not *Holiness his image* ? Did not *he* make the *Law* that doth command it ; professing that none shall see his face without it ? *Heb. 12. 14.* O sinful Nation ! O people laden with iniquity ! Repent, Repent speedly and with *self-loathing* ; Repent of this inhumane crime, lest God should take away your glory, and enter himself into judgement with you, and plead against you the scorn that you have cast upon the Creator, the Saviour, the sanctifier to whom you were engaged in your baptismal VOWS !

vows ! Left when he plagueth and condemneth you, he say, *Why persecuted you me ?* ( Acts 9. 4. ) *Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.* ] Read Prov. 1. 20. to the end. When Israel mocked the messengers of the Lord, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets, his wrath arose against his people till there was no remedy, 2 Chron. 26. 16. And O that you that are the Physicians of this diseased Land, would specially call them to Repentance for this, and help them against it for the time to come.

Having called you first to *Remember your misdoings*, and secondly to *loath your selves in your own eyes for them* ; I must add a third, That you stop not here, but proceed to *Reformation*, or else all the rest is but hypocrisy. And here it is that I most earnestly intreat this Honourable Assembly for their best assistance. O make not the forementioned sins your own ; lest you hear from God, *quod minus crimine, quam absolute peccatum est.* Though England hath been used to cry loud for *liberty*, let them not have liberty to abuse their Maker, and to damn their souls, if you can hinder it. *Optimus est reipublica status, ubi nulla libertas deest, nisi licentia pereundi*, as Nero once was told by his unsuccessful Tutor. Use not men to a liberty of scorning the Laws of God, lest you teach them to scorn yours : For can you expect to be better used then God ? And *Cui plus licet quam par est, plus vult quam licet*, ( Gell. l. 17. c. 14. ) We have all seen the evils of *Liberty* to be wanton in *Religion* : Is it not worse to have *Liberty* to deride *Religion* ? If men shall have leaveto go quietly to  
hell

hell *themselves*, let them not have leave to *mock* poor souls from Heaven. The suffering to the sound in faith is as nothing : for what is the foaming rage of mad men to be regarded ? But that in *England*, God *should be so provoked*, and souls *so hindred* from the pathes of life, that whoever will be converted and saved, must be made a laughing-stock ( which carnal minds cannot endure, ) this is the mischief which we deprecate.

The eyes of the Nation, and of the Christian world, are much upon you, some high in hopes, some deep in fears, some wailing in dubious expectations for the issue of your counsels. Great expectations, in deep necessities, should awake you to the greatest care and diligence. Though I would not by omitting any necessary directions or admonitions to you, invite the world to think that I speak to such as cannot endure to hear, and that so Honourable an Assembly doth call the Ministers of Christ to do those works of their proper office, which yet they will be offended if they do ; yet had I rather erre in the *defective* part, then by *excess*, and therefore shall not presume to be too particular. Only in general, in the Name of Christ, and on the behalf a trembling yet hoping Nation, I most earnestly beseech and wain you, that *you own and promote the power and practice of Godliness in the Land*; and that as God, whose Ministers you are ( *Rom. 13. 4* ) is a *Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, *Heb. 11. 6.* and hath made this a principal Article of our Faith ; so you would imitate your absolute Lord ; and *honour them that fear the Lord*, and encourage *them that diligently seek*

seek him. And may I not freely tell you, that God should have the *precedency*: and that you must first seek his Kingdom and the righteousness thereof, and he will facilitate all the rest of your work. Surely no Powers on earth should be offended, that the God from whom, and for whom, and through whom they have what they have, is preferred before them; when they should own no interest but his, and what is subservient to it. I have long thought that pretences of a necessity of beginning with our own affairs, hath frustrated our hopes from many Parliaments already: and I am sure that by delays the enemies of our peace have got advantage to cross our ends and attain their own. Our calamities begun in differences about Religion, and still that's the wound that most needs closing: and if that were done, how easily (I dare confidently speak it) would the generality of sober godly people be agreed in things civil, and become the strength and glory of the Sovereign (under God?) And though with grief and shame we see this work so long undone (may we hope that God hath reserved it to this season:) Yet I have the confidence to profess, that (as the exalting of one party by the ejection and persecuting of the rest, is the sinful way to your dishonour and our ruine, so the terms on which the differing parties most considerable among us, may safely, easily and suddenly unite, are very obvious; and our concord a very easie thing, if the prudent and moderate might be the guides, and selfish interests and passion did not set us at a further distance then our principles have done. And to shew you the facility of such an agreement, were it not that such personal

matters are much liable to misinterpretations, I should tell you, that the late Reverend Primate of *Ireland* consented (in less than half an hours debate) to five or six Propositions which I offered him, as sufficient for the Concord of the moderate Episcopal and Presbyterian, without forsaking the Principles of their Parties. O that the Lord would yet shew so much mercy to a sinful Nation, as to put it into your hearts to *promote but the practice of those Christian principles which we are all agreed in*: I hope there is no controversy among us *whether God should be obeyed, and hell avoided, and Heaven first sought, and Scripture be the rule and test of our Religion, and sin abhorred and cast out*. O that you would but further the practice of *this* with all you might: We crave not of you any Lordship or dominion, nor riches, nor interest in your temporal affairs: we had rather see a Law to exclude all Ecclesiasticks from all power of force: The God of Heaven that will judge you and us, will be a righteous Judge betwixt us, whether we crave any thing unreasonable at your hands. These are the summe of our requests: 1. That *Holiness* may be encouraged, and the overspreading profaneness of this Nation effectually kept down. 2. That an *able diligent Ministry* may be encouraged, and not *corrupted by temporal power*. 3. That *Discipline* may be *seriously promoted*, and Ministers no more hindered by Magistrates in the exercise of *their* office, then Physicians and Schoolmasters are in *theirs*; seeing it is but a *Government like theirs*, consisting in the liberty of conscionable managing the works of our own office that we expect: Give us but leave to labour

labour in Christs Vineyard with such encouragement as the necessity of obstinate souls requireth, and we will ask no more. You have less cause to restrain us from *discipline* then from *preaching*: for it is a *more flesh-displeasing* work that we are *hardlier* brought to. I foretell you, that *you shut out me and all that are of my mind*, if you would force us to administer *Sacraments* without *Discipline*, and without the conduct of our own discretion, to whom the Magistrate appoints it; as if a Physician must give no Physick but by *your prescript*. The *antidisciplinarian* Magistrate I could as resolutely suffer under as the *superstitious*; it being *worse* to *cast out Discipline*, then to *erre* in the *circumstances* of it. The question is not, *whether Bishops or no?* but *whether Discipline or none?* and *whether enow to use it?* 4. We earnestly request that *Scripture sufficiency as the test of our Religion*, and *only universal Law of Christ* may be maintained: and that *nothing unnecessary may be imposed as necessary*, nor the *Churches* *unuly* laid on that which *will not bear it, nor ever did*. O that we might but have leave to serve God only as Christ hath commanded us, and to go to Heaven in the same way as the Apostles did! These are our desires; and whether they are reasonable, God will judge.

*Give first to God the things that are Gods, and then give Caesar the things that are Caesars.* Let your *wisdom* be *first pure*, and then *peaceable*. Not but that we are resolved to be loyal to Sovereignty, though you deny us all these: whatever malicious men pretend, *that is not nor shall not be our difference*. I have proved more publickly when it was more dangerous



to publish it, that the *generality* of the Orthodox-sober Ministers, and godly people of this Nation, did never consent to King-killing, and resisting Sovereign Power, nor to the change of the ancient Government of this Land; but abhorred the pride and ambition that attempted it. I again repeat it: The blood of some, the imprisonment and displacing of others, the banishment, or flight of others, and the detestations and publick protestations of more; the oft declared sense of *England*, and the wars and sad estate of *Scotland*: have all declared before the world, to the shame of calumniators, that the generality of the Orthodox-sober Protestants of these Nations, have been true to their allegiance, and detesters of unfaithfulness and ambition in subjects, and resisters of heresie and schism in the Church, and of Anarchy and Democratical confusions in the Common-wealth. And though the Land hath ringed with complaints and threatnings against my self, for publishing a *little* of the mixture of Jesuitical and Familistical contrivances, for taking down together our Government and Religion, and setting up new ones for the introduction of Popery, infidelity and heresie, yet I am assured that there is much more of this confederacy for the all-seeing *God* to discover in time, to shame of Papists that cannot be content to write themselves for the killing of Kings when the Pope hath once excommunicated them, and by the Decrees of a General Council at the Laterane, to depose Princes that will extirpate such as the Pope calls Hereticks, and absolve all their subjects from their fidelity and allegiance, but they must also creep into the Councils



Councils and Armies of Protestants, and taking the advantage of successes and ambition, withdraw men at once from their Religion and allegiance, that they may cheat the world into a belief that Treasons are the fruits of the Protestant profession, when these masked Juglers have come by night and sown and cherished these Romish tares. As a *Papist* must cease to be a *Papist* if he will be truly and fully loyal to his Sovereign (as I am ready to prove against any adversary;) so a *Protestant* must so far cease to be a *Protestant* before he can be disloyal. For *Rom. 13.* is part of the Rule of his Religion. Unhappily there hath been a difference among us, *which is the higher Power*, when those that have their shares in the Sovereignty are divided: But whether we should be subject to the Higher Power, is no question with us.

Gentlemen, I have nothing to ask of you for my self nor any of my brethren as for themselves: But that you will be friends to serious preaching and holy living, and will not ensnare our consciences with any unscriptural inventions of men: this I would beg of you as on my knees: 1. As for the sake of Christ, whose cause and people it is that I am pleading for. 2. For the sake of thousands of poor souls in this Land, whose salvation or damnation will be much promoted by you. 3. For the sake of thousands of the dear servants of the Lord, whose eyes are waiting to see what God will do by your hands. 4. For your own sakes, who are undone if you dash your selves on the rock you should build on, and set against the holy God, and turn the cries of his servants to Heaven for deliverance from you, *Luke 18. 8.* If you stumble on

Christ, he will break you in pieces; but if he fall upon you, he will grind you to powder. 5. For the sake of your posterity, that they may not be bred up in ignorance or ungodliness. 6. For the Honour of the Nation and your selves; that you turn by all the suspicions and fears that are raised in the Land. 7. For the honour of sound Doctrine and Church-Government, that you may not bring schisme into greater credit then now you have brought it to deserved shame. For if you frown on godliness under pretence of uniformity in unnecessary things, and make times worse then when Libertinisme and schisme so prevailed, the people will look back with groans and say, *what happy times did we once see?* and so will honour schisme, and Libertinisme, and usurpation, through your oppression. 8. Lastly, I beg this of you, for the Honour of Sovereignty and the Nations Peace. A Prince of a holy people is most Honourable. The interest of holiness is Christs own: Happy is that Prince that espouseth this, and subjecteth all his own unto it. See *Psalm* 1. 1. 2. & 101. & 15. 4. It is the conscionable, prudent, godly people of the Land that must be the glory and strength of their lawfull Sovereign. Their Prayers will serve him better then the hideous Oaths and Curses of the profane. Wo to the Rulers that set themselves against the interest of Christ and holiness: Read *Psalm* 2. or that make snares for their consciences, that they may persecute them as disobedients, who are desirous to obey their Rulers in subordination to the Lord. See *Dan.* 3. & 6. 5, 10, 13. I have dealt plainly with you, and told you the very truth. If God have now a blessing for you and us, you will obey it: but if

if you refuse, then look to your selves and answer it  
if you can. I am sure in spite of earth and hell, it shall  
go well with them that live by faith.

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FINIS.

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